



MICHIGAN UNITED CONSERVATION CLUBS

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SB 570

Tax Protection for Charitable Sportsmens Clubs

Sponsored by: Sen. Peter MacGregor; co-sponsored by Sen. John Proos, Sen. Geoff Hansen and Sen. Dale Zorn

SB 570 would exempt real property owned by a qualified sportsmen's club from collection of local property taxes if:

- The sportsmen's organization is organized as a non-profit or affiliated with a statewide nonprofit organization; and
- The organization is organized for the purpose of educating the public in conservation and in hunting, fishing, archery or firearms safety and shooting sports; and
- The property is made available to the public, however a reasonable membership fee may be charged for use; and
- The organization offers free or reduced rate educational materials to the public, such as sponsoring free education materials to local schools; and
- The property is available without charge to one or more local government entity consistent with its primary purpose; and
- The organization offers discounted membership and rates based on the member's ability to pay.

Conservation clubs in Michigan provide a multitude of public services, from range time for local law enforcement, hunter's safety instruction for local youth, meeting space for local boards and other nonprofit organizations, maintaining and improving fish and wildlife habitat, to educating the public about conservation, hunting, fishing, trapping and firearms safety. Many of these conservation clubs fill an additional public service to the State of Michigan through their support and affiliation with 501c3 charitable conservation organizations like Michigan United Conservation Clubs.

The public service provided by local conservation, rod and gun, sportsmen's and archery clubs earned tax-exemptions in recognition for those valuable public services. However, in recent years, local tax assessors have begun assessing new taxes on many of these nonprofit organizations which had traditionally been exempt. Nonprofit conservation clubs often operate on a shoestring budget, and these improper tax bills threaten to shut many of them down, depriving local communities of the services they provide.

Therefore, Michigan United Conservation Clubs fully supports Senate Bill 570 to protect charitable sportsmen's clubs from burdensome, and often new, tax assessments which threaten the viability of these organizations to provide the public services they have been rendering for decades.

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